

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) A folded blank for the manufacture of a rigid packet (2), obtainable from a flat diecut blank (3) presenting a first panel (6) and a second panel (8) coinciding respectively with the front (7) and the back (9) of the packet (2), pairs of lateral panels (10, 11, 30) hingedly attached respectively to the first and second panels (6,8) and establishing the flanks (60) of the packet (2), and end panels (12, 14) establishing the top end'face (13) and the bottom end face (15) of the packet (2), characterized in that the flat diecut blank (3) is bent double along at least one fold line (5) to create a first part (16) and a second part (17) flattened one against the other in such a manner that the folded blank (1) presents a collapsed configuration initially; in that each of the lateral panels (10, 11, 30) associated with one of the two parts (16, 17) of the blank presents a preferential fold line (25) delimiting a first inner lateral portion (26) and a second outer lateral portion (27), positioned such that the second outer portions (27) can be bent along the preferential fold line (25) and at least one portion (27) of one part (16, 17) offered to the corresponding lateral panel (11, 10) of the other part (16, 17) so that when the folded blank (1) is erected to form the packet (2), the corresponding lateral panel (11, 10) will overlap and cover the preferential fold line (25).

2. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 1, wherein the second outer portion (27)

of a lateral panel (10, 11) presented by one part (17, 16) of the blank (1), offered to the panel (10, 11) that will ultimately overlap the preferential fold line (25), is fastened permanently to the opposite part (16, 17) of the blank.

3. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 2, wherein the second outer portion (27) is fastened permanently to the corresponding lateral panel (10, 11) presented by the opposite part (16, 17) of the blank.

4. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 3, wherein the preferential fold line (25) coincides with an axis of symmetry of the lateral panel (10, 11, 30).

5. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 4, wherein the second outer portions (27) of each lateral portion are substantially flattened against the respective first inner portions (26) when the blank is in the initially collapsed configuration.

6. (Currently Amended) A folded blank as in claim 5~~claims 1 to 5~~, referable to a predominating axis (4) disposed transversely to a predominating axis (4') of the flat diecut blank (3) and extending parallel to the fold line (5) of the selfsame blank (3).

7. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 6, wherein the preferential fold line (25)

of the lateral panel (10, 11,30) coincides with the fold line (5) of the flat blank (3), and the lateral panel (30) is hinged on opposite sides of the preferential fold line (25) to the first panel (6) and the second panel (8).

8. (Currently Amended) A folded blank as in claim 5~~claims 1 to 5~~, referable to a predominating axis (4) coinciding with a predominating axis (4') of the flat diecut blank (3) and extending transversely to the fold line (5) of the selfsame blank (3).

9. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 8, wherein the fold line (5) is applied to an end panel (14) hinged on opposite sides of the selfsame fold line (5) to the first panel (6) and the second panel (8).

10. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 9, wherein the second outer portions (27) of the lateral panels (11) associated with the second panel (8) are positioned such that when the folded blank (1) is erected to form the packet (2), each lateral panel (10) associated with the first panel (6) will overlap the corresponding preferential fold line (25).

11. (Original) A folded blank as in claim 9, wherein the second outer portions (27) of the lateral panels (10) associated with the first panel (6) are positioned

such that when the folded blank (1) is erected to form the packet (2), each lateral panel (11) associated with the second panel (8) will overlap the corresponding preferential fold line (25).

12. (Currently Amended) A folded blank as in claim 11~~claims 1 to 11~~, comprising a plurality of first crease lines (20, 24) functioning as hinges between the lateral panels (10, 11, 30) and the first and second panels (6, 8).

13. (Currently Amended) A folded blank as in claim 12~~claims 1 to 12~~, comprising a plurality of second crease lines (19, 22, 23) functioning as hinges between the end panels (12, 14) and the first and second panels (6, 8).

14. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing a folded blank (1) as in claim 13~~claims 1 to 13~~, characterized in that it comprises the steps of: -bending the lateral panels (10, 11, 30) associated with the first panel (6) or the second panel (8) along the preferential fold line (25); -bending the first part (16) of the folded blank (1) flat over the second part (17) in such a way that the second outer portions (27) of the lateral panels (10, 11) associated with one part (17, 16) are positioned, relative to the corresponding lateral panels (10, 11) of the other part (16, 17), so that when the folded blank (1) is erected to form the packet (2), each lateral panel (10, 11) will overlap a corresponding preferential fold line

(25); -fastening the second outer portion (27) to the other part (16,17).

15. (Original) A method as in claim 14, wherein the overlapping step includes the step of bending the first and second parts (16, 17) of the flat diecut blank (3) along the fold line (5).

16. (New) A folded blank as in claim 1, referable to a predominating axis (4) disposed transversely to a predominating axis (4') of the flat diecut blank (3) and extending parallel to the fold line (5) of the selfsame blank (3).

17. (New) A folded blank as in claim 1, referable to a predominating axis (4) coinciding with a predominating axis (4') of the flat diecut blank (3) and extending transversely to the fold line (5) of the selfsame blank (3).

18. (New) A folded blank as in claim 1, comprising a plurality of first crease lines (20, 24) functioning as hinges between the lateral panels (10, 11, 30) and the first and second panels (6,8).

19. (New) A folded blank as in claim 1, comprising a plurality of second crease lines (19, 22, 23) functioning as hinges between the end panels (12, 14) and the first and second panels (6,8).

20. (New) A method of preparing a folded blank (1) as in claim 1, characterized in that it comprises the steps of: -bending the lateral panels (10,11, 30) associated with the first panel (6) or the second panel (8) along the preferential fold line (25); -bending the first part (16) of the folded blank (1) flat over the second part (17) in such a way that the second outer portions (27) of the lateral panels (10, 11) associated with one part (17,16) are positioned, relative to the corresponding lateral panels (10,11) of the other part (16,17), so that when the folded blank (1) is erected to form the packet (2), each lateral panel (10,11) will overlap a corresponding preferential fold line (25); -fastening the second outer portion (27) to the other part (16,17).